



Testimony in Support of SB 753
An Act Concerning the Counting of Incarcerated Persons for the Purpose of Determining
Legislative Districts

Dear Members of the Government Administration and Elections Committee of Connecticut General Assembly:

My name is Zenaida Aguirre. I am a resident of New Haven and am testifying to communicate my strong support for Connecticut SB 753, *An Act Concerning the Counting of Incarcerated Persons for the Purpose of Determining Legislative Districts*.

As a first-time voter I have had the chance to express my opinion on the positions of my legislative district. As part of the district's population, this was a right that I was able to express. I have learned, however, that this is not the case for incarcerated individuals who are being counted as part of Connecticut's population.

Stopping the practice of counting incarcerated people as residents of the districts in which their correctional facilities are located is imperative to increasing the representativeness of Connecticut's General Assembly. The counting of incarcerated persons, the vast majority of whom cannot vote, as members of the legislative districts in which their carceral facilities are located affords inappropriate electoral power to said districts. Moreover, incarcerated persons who can vote must do so in the districts where they lived prior to incarceration. The status quo inaccurately invests legislative authority and exacerbates racial inequities in government, given that Connecticut districts housing correctional facilities have a far higher proportion of white voters than compared to local incarcerated populations.

This is racial injustice in the hands of the Connecticut state government as incarcerated persons, consisting of a large number of black and brown people, have no voting representation in their home districts. In addition, despite counting incarcerated people as part of the larger Connecticut population, state representatives have rarely visited correctional facilities that are located in their districts. There are many ways in which passing this bill will move away from inhumane practices that the Connecticut government is responsible for.

Every Connecticut resident deserves equal representation in the state legislature. I ask the committee to consider passing S.B. 753 to enshrine that same principle in law.

Sincerely,

Zenaida Aguirre
New Haven, CT